

CRAVEN COUNTY

**CRAVEN
COUNTY
WATERFRONT ACCESS
PLANS AND DESIGNS**

**FOR
COWPEN LANDING
AND
BRINSON SCHOOL**



JOHN J. HOOTON & ASSOCIATES, WILMINGTON, N.C.

North Carolina Coastal Zone Management Program

CRAVEN COUNTY
WATERFRONT ACCESS
PLANS AND DESIGNS
FOR
COWPEN LANDING
AND
THE BRINSON SCHOOL SITE

Prepared for
The Craven County Recreation & Parks Department
George B. Sawyer, Director
with assistance from
The Cowpen Landing Recreation Committee
The Brinson School Recreation Committee
The Weyerhaeuser Corporation

Consultants
John J. Hooton & Associates
Edward D. Stone and Associates, Inc.
Synthesis

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The past decade has seen a continued migration of population to coastal areas and North Carolina has been no exception. Preliminary census results indicate that all of North Carolina's coastal counties gained population, and most of them experienced influxes of 8 percent or more.

Even though Craven County has no oceanfront shoreline, it grew by 13.6 percent. This surge in growth has required coastal towns and counties to rethink land use and service policies, so that limited coastal resources can be allocated effectively and fairly among competing interests. One area of growing concern to local and state officials and citizens has been the availability and quality of access to public trust areas, or more specifically, ocean and riverine shorelines and waters. The State of North Carolina, through its coastal management program, provides financial assistance to local governments to develop plans and policies for future growth.

Craven County, through its Recreation and Parks Department, applied for and received a planning grant to develop master plans for two waterfront access areas in the County--Cowpen Landing and the Brinson School site. These areas are significantly different in physical characteristics and political and legal constraints, but both represent excellent opportunities for the County to expand and improve access to waterfront areas for its residents. The following text and plans describe the results of the planning process.

2.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS AND ITS PARTICIPANTS

A successful planning process will have as its cornerstone the involvement from the beginning of as many of the individuals and organizations--public or private--affected by the final plans. The Craven County Recreation and Parks Department recognized this necessity and established ad hoc committees for each of the two sites to review preliminary and final designs. In the case of Cowpen Landing, the Weyerhaeuser Corporation provided direction and advice to the ad hoc committee and design consultants.

The following persons provided their time and advice by serving on the committees:

COWPEN LANDING

George Sawyer, Craven County
James White
James Bryant
Woodrow Brown
Keith Hundley, Weyerhaeuser

BRINSON SCHOOL

George Sawyer, Craven County
Tommy Best
Edgar Barwick
Ruby Conner
Jane Atkinson
Ben Godottee

3.0 THE BRINSON SCHOOL SITE

History

For 10 years, the Craven County Board of Education and Board of Commissioners have formally agreed to cooperate in an effort to improve school sites for recreational purposes. These sites would not only serve school children, but provide additional recreational facilities for all members of the community. The Brinson Memorial School was one of the first products of this agreement. Since 1972, facilities and improvements that have been added include two lighted tennis courts, an outdoor lighted combination volleyball and basketball court, a multipurpose lighted ball field complex with fencing and bleachers, addition of a new school annex, a gymnasium equipped with permanent basketball backboards and goals, and the initial clearing of woods adjacent to Neuse River frontage. Recent improvements include lighting of one of the ballfields. While these improvements, with the existing school buildings, provide a definite character and direction for future land use, there is considerable additional space for new uses that would complement the existing ones.

Existing Land Use

The dominant land use at the site is the school building and auxiliary uses, such as play areas and parking. The second most developed areas are two ball fields with lighting, two tennis courts, and a volleyball/basketball court. A third developed area, but currently not being utilized, is the amphitheater located in the northeast corner of the property. The amphitheater has a stage area and a seating capacity of about 1,000 persons, but apparently has been little used since its construction. The remainder of the site, along the western boundary, is undeveloped and is dominated by scrub vegetation and the Neuse River shoreline.

Problems and Opportunities

The most pressing problem associated with the site is posed by the open sewer pit located behind the school building. This pit and its outfall

represent a possible health hazard, as well as a serious limitation on future uses and should receive first priority for future improvement. A second problem, but one that also presents opportunities, is the erosion occurring along the shoreline. Steep embankments have been created in some areas, creating unsafe conditions for public use. However, these areas, if properly controlled with protective structures, represent an opportunity for overlooks, nature observation areas, and other controlled, passive type uses. The lack of use of the amphitheater is also a problem that could be converted into an opportunity for expanded use. Some redesign and promotion will be required to renew interest in this facility.

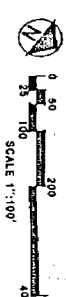
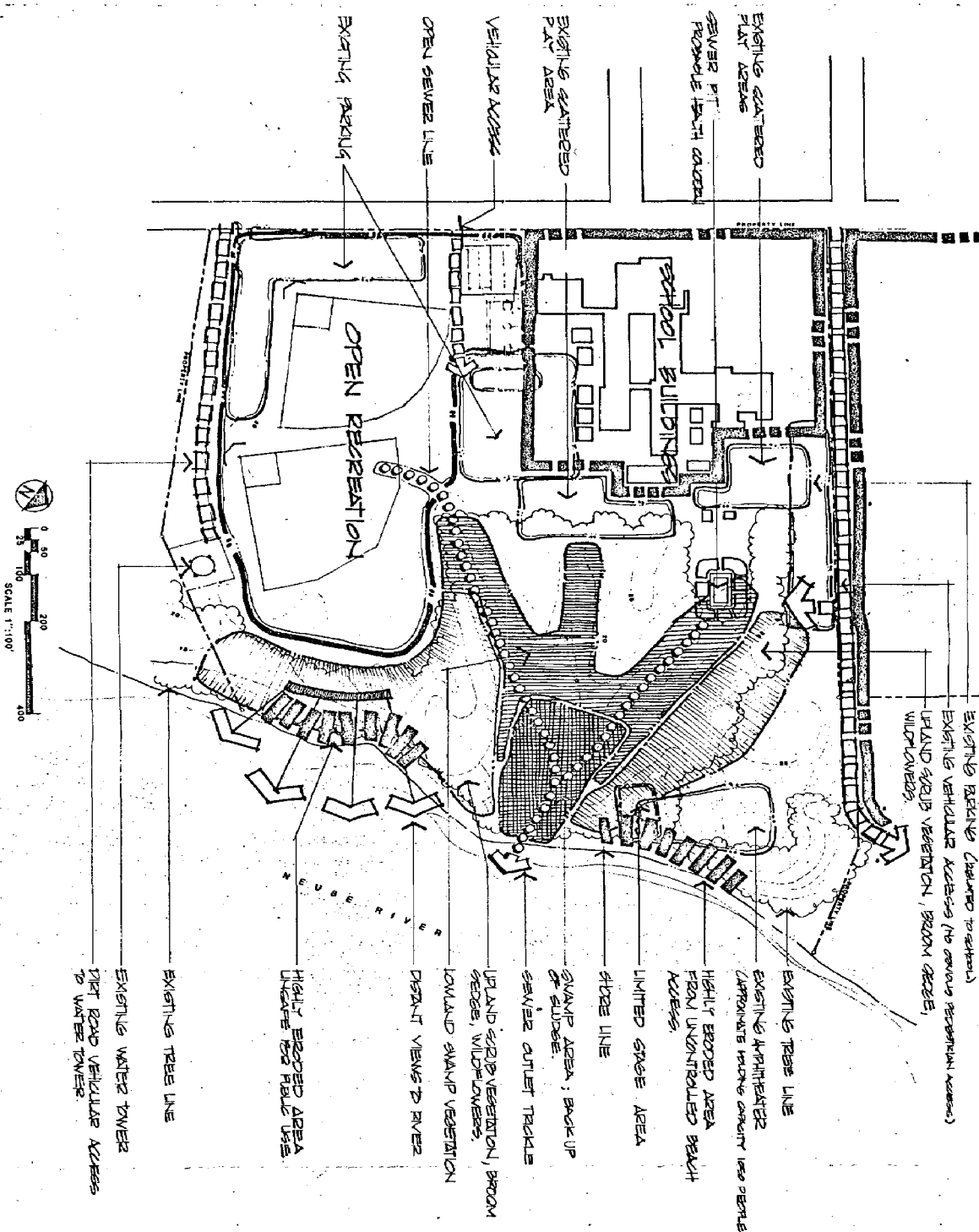
Design Objectives

The major objectives in planning for the future use of the Brinson site are as follows:

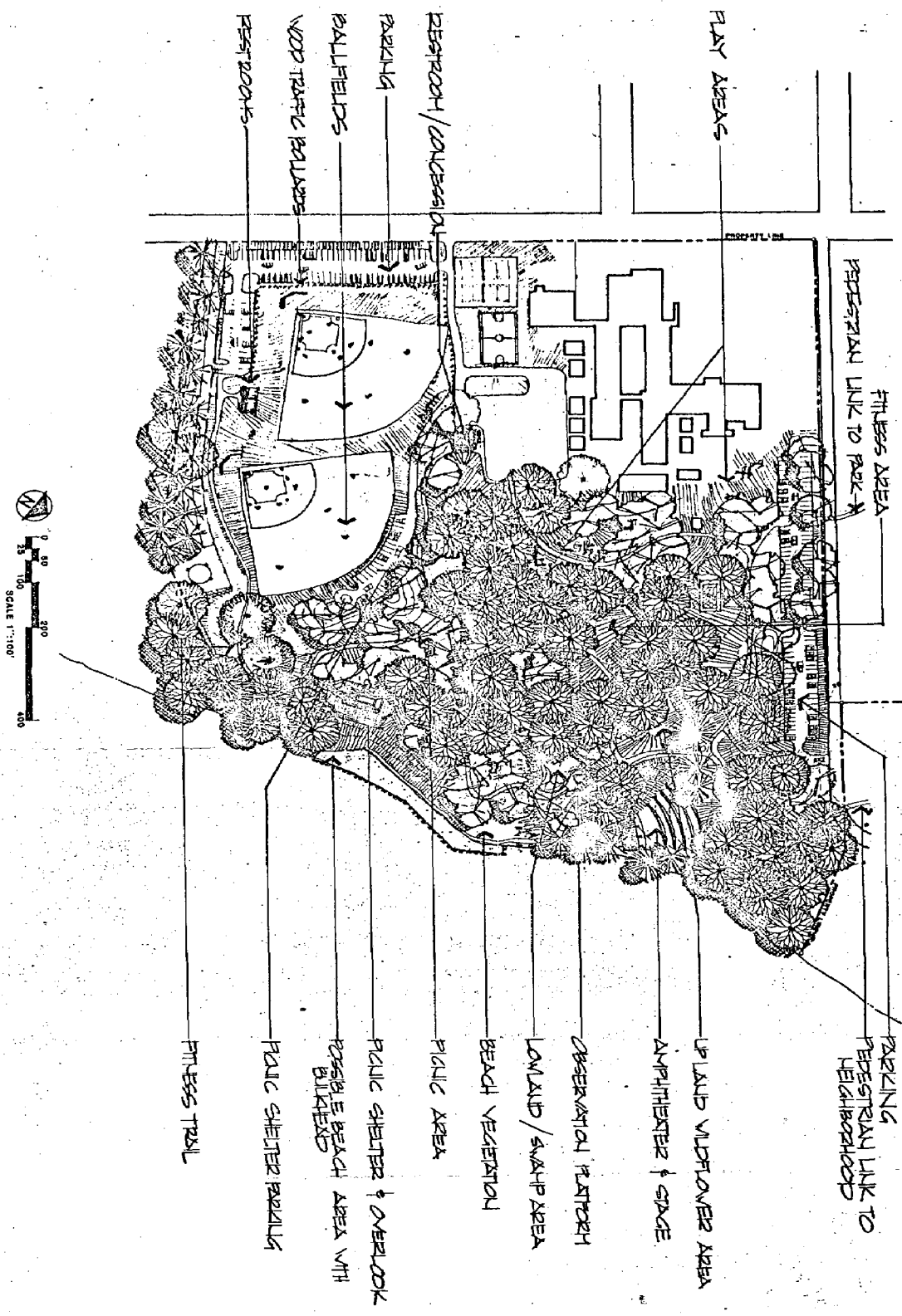
- (1) Develop a comprehensive plan for the utilization of all areas, so that expanded and diversified recreational opportunities are provided for all members of the community;
- (2) Develop presently unused areas, primarily as passive type uses such as nature, fitness and jogging trails and picnicing;
- (3) Maximize access to the water. Access shall include not only direct physical access, but also visual access;
- (4) To the extent feasible, provide access for handicapped persons;
- (5) Develop plans for improvement of existing facilities, to include location of new supporting facilities and expansion of existing ones.

The following plans graphically describe the existing land uses, design opportunities and objectives.

EXISTING RESIDENTIAL



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



MASTER PLAN

4.0 COWPEN LANDING

The Cowpen Landing site is owned by the Weyerhaeuser Corporation but has been used as an access point for nearly 100 years. Most recently, it has been used as a boat launching area for fishermen. On most weekends, a mix of related recreational activities also takes place. A concrete boat ramp was constructed by the Weyerhaeuser Corporation several years ago along the southern shore. A short distance downstream is the fresh water intake canal for the Weyerhaeuser pulping plant.

Problems and Opportunities

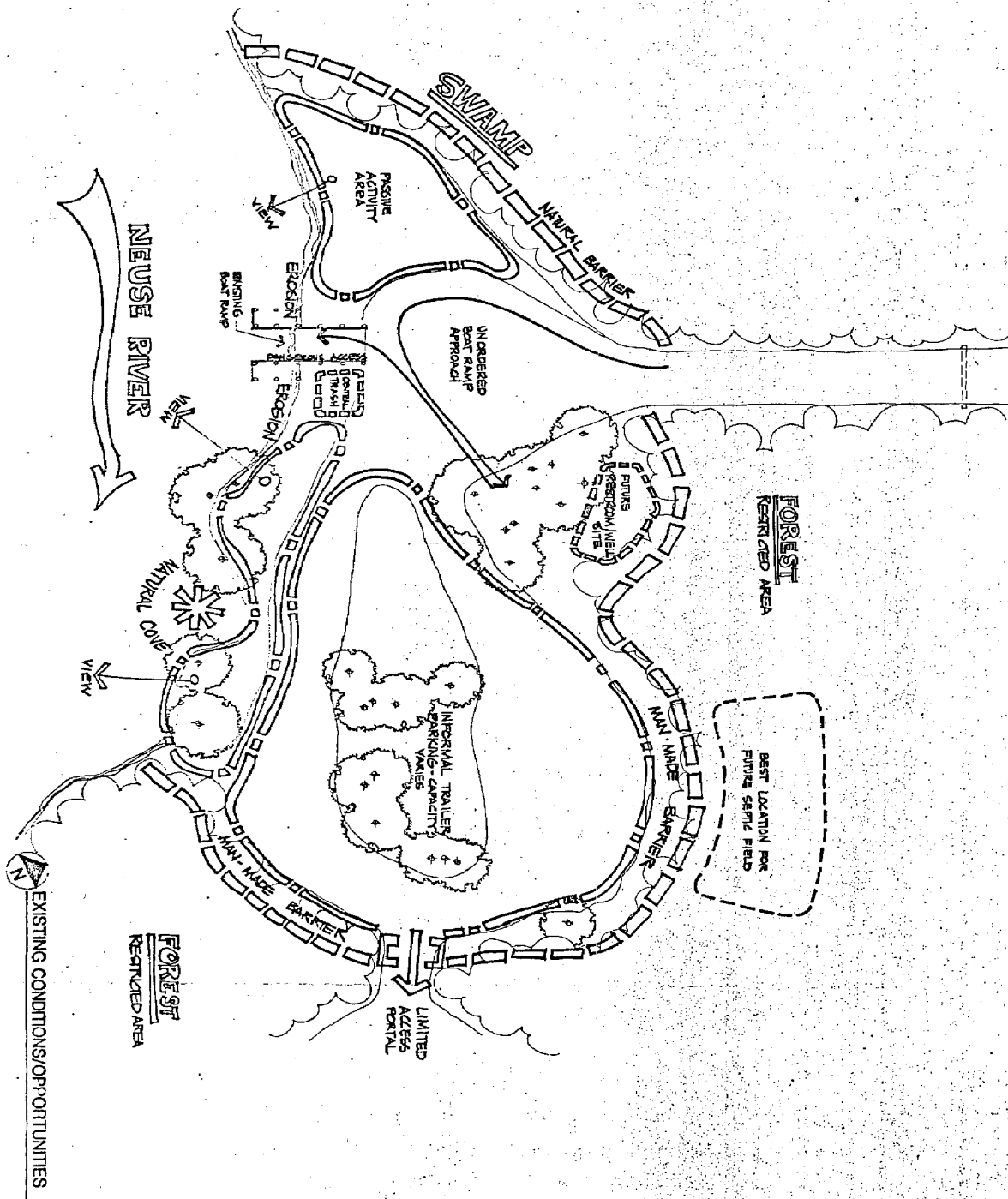
Two major problems exist at the Cowpen site. The first is the problem presented to the Weyerhaeuser Corporation by uncontrolled activities occurring in the area. The lack of any physical definition to the area results in uncontrolled activity that could possibly result in damage to Weyerhaeuser property (e.g., by fire). Another problem to the owner is protection of the fresh water intake canal. The second major problem is of concern to users. This problem centers on the lack of ordered ingress and egress and the inadequacy and poor design of existing facilities. The opportunity presented by these problems is to provide adequate facilities and ordered, defined recreational activities that will enhance access while protecting the property of the owner.

Design Objectives

The major design objective for the Cowpen site may be summarized as follows:

To develop a plan that will provide order and definition to recreational activities in the area so that the property owner's interests are protected and waterfront access opportunities for the public are improved.

The following plans describe one method of attaining this objective.



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ARCHITECTS PLANNERS

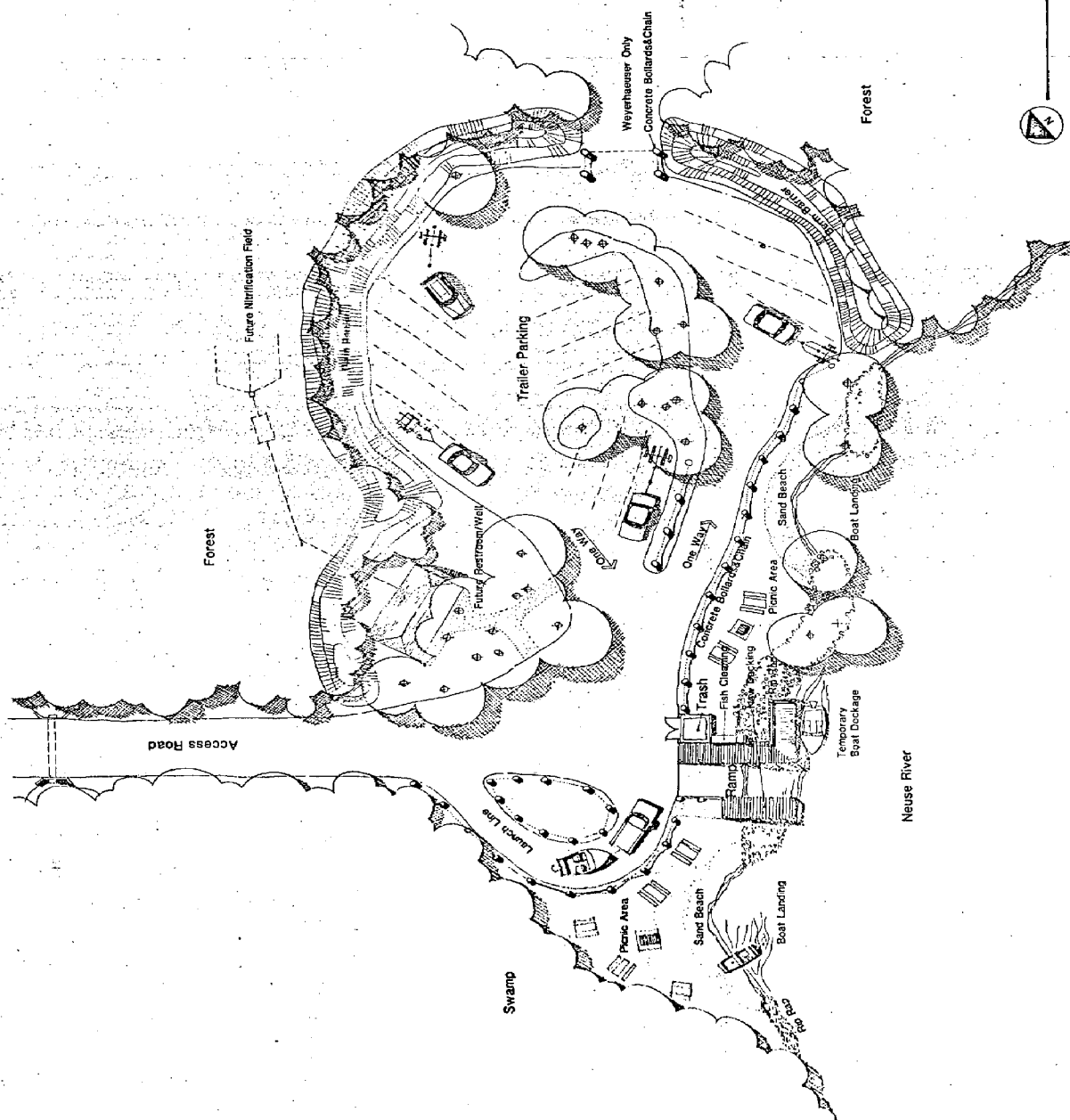
John J. Hooton & Associates
Planning Consultants

5307 Causeway Dr. PO 598
Wilmington, NC 28403
Telephone: 919-256-4141

Edward D. Stone, Jr. and Associates, Inc.
EDSA
Planners and Landscape Architects
PO Box 837 Wilmington, NC 28401

COWPEN LANDING
Craven County, N.C.

DATE:
DRAWN BY:
CHECKED BY:
SHEET NO:



synthesis
ARCHITECTS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

530 Causeway Dr. PO 598
Wrightsville Beach
North Carolina 25590
Telephone 919 256 4141

John J. Hooton & Associates
Planning Consultants

Edward D. Stone, Jr. and Associates, Inc.
EDSA
Planners and Landscape Architects
P.O. Box 327 Wilmington, NC 28401

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5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Brinson School Site

The cost estimate for full development of the Brinson site is between \$114,350 and \$124,350. A detailed breakdown for each item is included in the Addenda. Without state or federal financial assistance, this represents a significant sum for local government. Recognizing this, the Brinson Site Recreational Committee recommended the following immediate priorities for construction.

PRIORITY ONE

Correction of sewerline problems	\$3,000 to 5,000
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PRIORITY TWO

Picnic shelter with overlook and exterior picnic unit	\$18,500
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PRIORITY THREE

Fitness and nature trails, with necessary grading and earthwork	\$21,000 to 26,000
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The Committee felt that these items would provide the most immediate and widespread use for the greatest number of residents. While the remaining facilities and uses are essential to full development, it was considered appropriate to delay establishing priorities for remaining uses until completion of the first three priorities.

Cowpen Landing

The full cost of improving the Cowpen site is \$44,753. Itemized costs are included in the Addenda. Because of possible legal problems, the Weyerhaeuser Corporation has required that no public funds be expended on improving the property; and for similar reasons, as well as budget limitations, some improvements may be considered inappropriate in the near or intermediate future. Thus, the final establishment of priorities will rest primarily with the Weyerhaeuser Corporation. However, based on the design objective of ordering and improving access so that the owner's property is protected, the following improvements would seem to be of priority.

FIRST PRIORITY

Bollards	\$5,850	
Stone paving	2,418	
Berm	890	
TOTAL		\$ 9,158

SECOND PRIORITY

Wood decking	\$9,840	
Trash pad and enclosure	620	
Rip-rap	1,110	
TOTAL		\$11,750

Immediate implementation of these improvements would provide ordered ingress and egress, parking, better boat launching access, reduced erosion, and less litter. To implement these, and the remaining recommended improvements, the Cowpen Landing Committee must continue to work with the Weyerhaeuser Corporation and County officials to insure continued cooperation of all groups.

BRINSON SCHOOL PARK

Preliminary Cost Estimate
Based on Master Plan

Picnic Shelter & Overlook	\$ 18,000.00
Exterior Picnic Unit (2 Picnic Tables, Grill, 1 Trash Can)	850.00
Restroom Building	5,000.00
Restroom/Concession Building	7,500.00
Nature Trails (including deck, signage)	12,000.00
Fitness Trail, Signage	3,000.00 - 5,000.00
Additional Play Equipment	10,000.00
Renovate Amphitheater and Stage	3,000.00
Add Lighting	1,500.00
Beach Area with Bulkhead	12,000.00
Additional Parking Areas As Shown	
85 Spaces	
Asphalt	25,000.00
Compacted Stone with Curbstops	10,000.00
Earthwork, Berms, Grading for Trails	6,000.00
Sewage Line Modifications ?	approx. 3,500.00 - 5,000.00
Additional Landscaping (wildflowers, grasses swamp plants)	min. of 3,000.00
Total	114, 350 to 124, 350

Preliminary Cost Estimate
Cowpen Landing
13 April 1982

Wood Decking - 656 s.f. @ \$15.00/s.f.	\$ 9,840
Trash Pad and Enclosure - 100 s.f. pad @ \$70.00/c.y. x 2	140
Fence 40 l.f. @ \$12.00/l.f.	480
Fish Clean and Pump	250
Rip-rap - 1 c.y./l.f. fill x 185 l.f. - 185 c.y. @ \$6.00/c.y.	1,110
Picnic Equipment - 7 tables @ \$350.00/ea. = \$2,450	
3 barbeques @ \$150.00/ea. = \$450	2,900
Concrete Bollards - \$150/ea. x 39	5,850
Lot Stone Paving - \$2.25/s.y. x 1,075	2,418
Berm - 400 l.f. @ 30 c.f./l.f. - 12,000 ÷ 27 - 445 c.y. x \$2.00/c.y.	890
Grass - 20,500 s.f. @ \$.25/s.f.	5,125
Bathroom - 350 s.f. @ \$45.00/s.f. (with septic system)	15,750
Total	<u>\$ 44,753</u>

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